reservation for wait-listed passengers in which the wait-listed passengers will get automatically upgraded to the next higher class;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what are the details of trains traversing through Orissa state there are proposed to be covered under this scheme?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI NARANBHAI RATHWA): (a) to (c) To ensure optimum utilization of available accommodation, a scheme to upgrade full fare paying confirmed and not waitlisted passengers to the next higher class has been launched in all Mail/Express trains, having sleeping accommodation, including those traversing through Orissa with effect from 24/02/2006.

East Coast Railway

3004. SHRI B.J. PANDA:
MS. PRAMILA BOHIDAR:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that East Coast Railway has picked up both in freight and passenger traffic during the current fiscal year;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what is the action plan to create additional rail infrastructure facilities to cope with the increased freight and passenger traffic on this rail system?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI NARANBHAI RATHWA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The revenue earning originating freight loading in the current fiscal year has shown an improvement of 12.27% in its first month *i.e.* April' 06 over that recorded during corresponding month of previous financial year. Although the passenger traffic recorded a growth of 10.53% in 2005-06 as compared to the previous years, the initial estimate of passenger earning in April' 06 indicates a growth of 0.03% over April'05.

(c) A large number of projects like new line, doubling works, traffic facilities work, railway electrification works and other works have been sanctioned on East Coast Railway and the works are in progress. The

ccmplete details of such work are included in the works, machinery and rolling stock programme of Railways for 2006-07 Part II (A,B, and C), Ministry of Railways, which was laid in both Houses of Parliament at the time of presentation of Railways Annual Budget 2006-07. Completion of these works will reduce the capacity bottlenecks and increase throughput over East Coast Railway.

Railway safety

3005. DR. K. MALAISAMY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that low priority has been given to rail safety in practice in the wake of negligible outlay of less than 2 per cent given out of the total outlay;

(b) whether it is also a fact that even the meagre allocation for safety is diverted for some other purpose on many a time;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the Railway Safety Directorate is nothing to do with the execution and review of safety performance work except to inspect and report; and

(d) whether the above situations would deliver the desired purposes of safety or will the entire process warrant a re-look for better performance and achievement?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI NARANBHAI RATHWA): (a) No, Sir. Safety is given due importance and substantial provisions are made therefor. The percentage outlay (Net) during 2006-07 for railway safety is 27% (including Market Borrowings) and 35% (excluding Market Borrowings) of the total net plan outlay.

(b) Funds allocated for safety works are not generally diverted. However, there has been some under-utilisation of railway Safety Fund in the earlier years mainly on account of Road Safety Works—Road over/under bridges which are executed jointly by the Railways and State Governments. In these works, delays occur due to fund constraints faced by the State Governments, delays in finalisation of approach alignment and acquisition of land by the State Governments, difficulties in removing encroachments on approach portion of bridges etc.